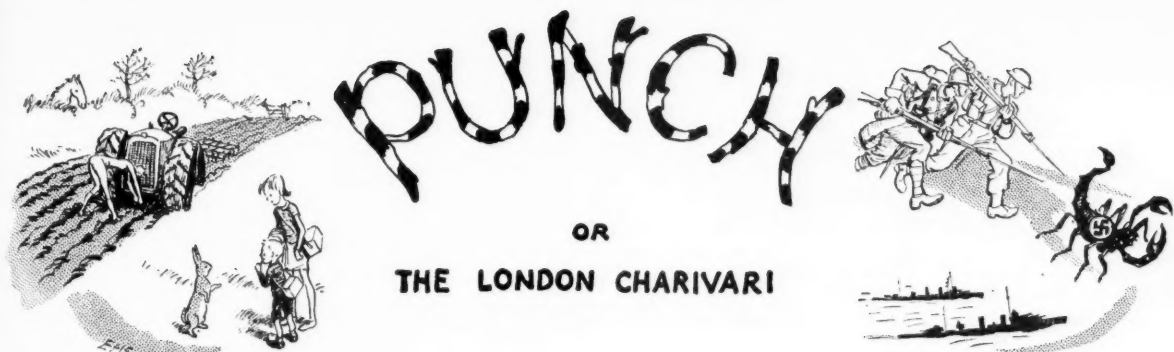


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Vol. CXCVII No. 5140

October 11 1939

Charivaria

THE only real trouble with German minorities of course is that they are ruling Germany.

There is one thing to be said for Herr HITLER. If he breaks one treaty he is always ready to sign two or three more.

A razor with a tiny electric light has been produced, making it possible to shave in the dark. But why not use an ordinary razor in conjunction with a luminous dial?

The Hot Air Raider

"The trouble with Hitler is he is too bombastic."

Schoolboy's Essay.

Burglars in New York stole a ventriloquist's dummy. As the owner was away, the captive went quietly.

In an interview, a Nazi official stated that the German army is a model of sobriety. The navy, however, is completely bottled.

Germans are complaining that the wireless appeals to them to "Eat Less Meat" were not accompanied by a few hints on how to do it.

A cabbage grown by a policeman at Chalfont St. Peter weighs 18½ lb. and measures a yard across. Now then, Gestapo, see what *you* can do!

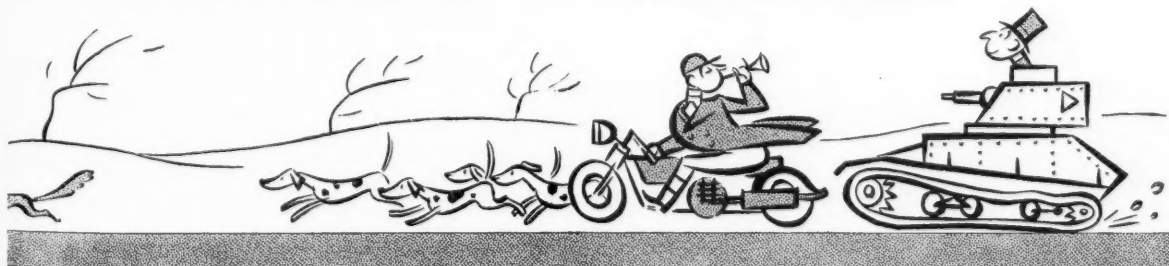
Just Remember This.

"Sir,—In an air-raid the best thing to do is to don a gas-mask and sit astride a low wall and fall and lie down on the side the bomb is not falling."—*Letter to "Wilts. and Glos. Standard."*

"German meals for German people" is the latest Nazi slogan. We can just imagine a Prussian household sitting down to its cold Reich pudding.

A roller-skating rink has been reopened in North London with the number of skaters limited to five hundred. There should be ample seating accommodation for all.

It is doubtful if there will be much fox-hunting this year. There is nothing in the rumour, however, that several famous Hunts are to be mechanised.





Evacuee. "Wot's pushing it?"

Captain Abeysance and the Press

WHEN the trumpets of war summoned Captain Abeysance from the Army Reserve to the Colours the change was not immediately apparent, for his surroundings were merely altered from a civilian office in the Strand to the War Office in W—1. It pretty soon dawned on him, however, that he was not nearly so well off. Elderly male clerks were hardly the same thing as bright young blonde typists, while the office furnishing seemed to be pre-last-war-but-three. What annoyed him in particular was an enormous double-doored steel press, holding important files and books and maps. Not only was it a repellent object to live with, but a recent enlarging of his office by the removal of a wooden partition had isolated it in the middle of the new room, where it looked as unpleasantly conspicuous as the coffin at an Egyptian feast. Moreover, since his office was in the basement, it tended to

block the already small supply of light. Abeysance wanted it against the back wall, and, feeling pretty strong one day after lunch, thought he'd just shove it across.

After two minutes he realised he'd misjudged either his strength or his lunch, and took his coat off.

After five minutes he gave up, sent for his head clerk and told him to collect up a few of the merry lads from the other room and shift the thing to the wall.

The head clerk nearly threw a fit. With great respect, he pointed out, Abeysance couldn't do *that*. Oh, yes, he went on hurriedly as Abeysance was beginning "Why the hell n—?" he could have it *shifted* all right anywhere he liked, but not by clerks, draughtsmen and so on; it wasn't their duty, in a manner of speaking. Clerks, draughtsmen and so on's unions didn't permit furniture-removal, which no doubt came under "Maintenance of

Office" and was the Office-keeper's responsibility. Besides, even if it were allowed, they were used only to grappling with rulers and pencils, not with presses. Hadn't the strength, if Abeysance took his meaning; nor yet the health. Why, old Abbot had a Knee, and Burton's Heart was . . . Well, not to put too fine a point on it, if the clerks, draughtsmen and so on started to move that press, Abeysance had better reserve hospital accommodation in advance. Take old Purvis's Stomach, for example; the doctor had—

Abeysance cut short the grisly details, and having ascertained that clerks, draughtsmen and so on were permitted to handle files and plans, and moreover could do so without either dying in agony or falling apart all over the office, told the head clerk to have the press emptied of its heavy contents and he'd damn well move it himself.

An hour later the office was thick

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with dust and ankle-deep in files. Abeyance was struggling once more with the press. After five minutes he again gave up. After five more minutes a thought struck him. He flushed guiltily, looked round to see that no one was watching and then examined the bottom of the press. With great relief he ascertained that it *wasn't* screwed to the floor. It was merely that it was *heavy*. So he sent for the Office-keeper.

Sorry, pointed out that gentleman, nothing to do with him. Maintenance of Office, yes. Furniture-moving, no. Furniture came under Office of Works. Good morning.

It was at this point that Abeyance nearly gave up. He knew from his previous experience in the Service that in most internal War Office manoeuvres the Office of Works sooner or later pops up, like the blank wall at the end of promising turnings in a maze. For you can't ring it up, you can't write to it, you can't go and see it, or even ask it over a drink to do something or other for you—not even the things it is its *duty* to do for you. It is just not allowed. The Office of Works, indeed, is something like the summit of the Matterhorn—remote, high up, and approachable only by skilled climbers knowing and following the recognised route. And the recognised route is through an almost equally mysterious entity called, let us say, Z Branch.

Abeyance spent two or three days establishing humble contact first with Z Branch and finally with the Matterhorn, and at last was able to inform it he wanted some heavy furniture moved in his office. The Matterhorn replied that it wasn't of course in the furniture-moving line itself, being an office, but it would get a contractor on the job. "But," pointed out Abeyance to Z Branch, "why a contractor, when two or three strong men could—"

"Two or three strong men," cut in Z Branch severely, "are what furniture-moving contractors are presumed to have, if nothing else."

Well, well, thought Abeyance, at last he was in sight of the end, however achieved; but he hadn't reckoned with W.D. Regulations. No job, naturally, can be given to a contractor without his first tendering for it, lest he soak the Government after doing the job instead of before. And further, no job can be put out to tender to one contractor alone: it must be tendered for by several, thus inaugurating a healthy spirit of commercial rivalry.

So when Abeyance, after hailing with delight the arrival in his office one

morning of a group of hard-faced men in bowler-hats, suddenly realised that they were not furniture-removers but just contractors offering for the job, he again nearly threw in his hand—particularly when they all produced foot-rules, note-books and pencils, and gathered round him with the anticipatory grin of dogs round a butcher's shop.

It is here that the saga of the press assumes the heroic proportions of an epic.

Afraid of hurting their feelings, afraid also possibly of being lynched should he reveal the truth, Abeyance shut the door, put his finger to his lips, and in a hoarse secretive whisper told them that water had been discovered under the War Office and that they were there to tender for the digging of a well to supply the building in case of air attack and resultant possible failure of the normal supply.

"Where is it, Sir?" breathed all the hard-faced men in confidential unison.

"Under there," replied Abeyance, pointing to the site occupied by the press—and before he could be questioned further, stole out for a quick one.

And that was how Abeyance persevered and got the press moved at last.

It was a pity in a way he couldn't have been more explicit, because they moved it against the wrong wall, where it still is—in, if possible, an even more inconvenient position than before.

But Abeyance doesn't dare bring the matter up again. Besides, all the authorities are too busy tiptoeing about and saying, "Have you heard? . . . Special water supply for the W.O. . . . Wells in the basement . . . They say it's going to cost a hundred thousand! . . ." A. A.

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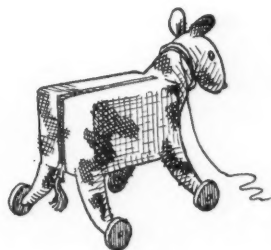
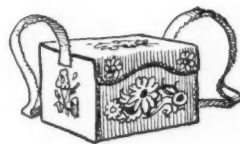
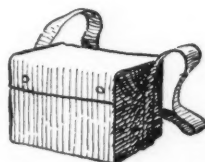
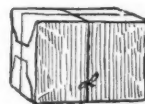
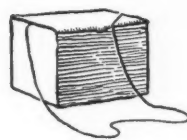
Reflection

HOW happy all people would be,
How merry to midnight from
morn,
How untroubled by murder the sea,
If Hitler had never been born.

Our news would be news of the yields
Where wheat across Europe is strown,
With Germans at work in their fields
And the Austrians reaping their own,

And the Czechs and Slovaks would be
free.

Now armies are marching in corn:
But what a fair world it would be
If Hitler had never been born.



adamson

EVOLUTION

Peace

FROM the tower they could not trust
The sentinels looked to the North;
They knew the chariot's dust
And they sent their courier forth.

"Is it Peace?" the messenger cried,
But the dust rose still on the plain;
And a second was sent to ride,
For the first came not again.

"What hast thou to do with Peace
Whose master's hands are red?
Turn thee behind me and cease,"
The chariot-driver said. EVOL.

o o

From the Home Front

Woodwork

COMMUNIQUE No. 1. 9.45 hours. Carpentry exercises of an exploratory nature were initiated this morning by a party under the command of Lance-Bombardier Morris. Our objective is the construction of a wooden apparatus upon which plates may be set after washing-up—a sort of rack. For this purpose wood, nails, two hammers, a saw and a chisel have already been assembled, after a successful sortie, brilliantly led by Gunner McEnty, on the Battery Store. Despite stubborn opposition from Quartermaster ("Who's been at my Eno's?") Crake, a large quantity of useful material has thus been won. Operations are now about to commence.

Communique No. 2. 10.15 hours. Our general plan of attack is now becoming clear. A large plank, resting upon a trestle, will form the foundation of the work, and upon this a serrated superstructure capable of holding plates in an upright position will be securely fixed. Questioned about the precise nature of this superstructure, Lance-Bombardier Morris declined to make a statement, presumably in order to avoid revealing information calculated to be directly or indirectly useful to an enemy. While fully understanding the motives behind this decision, it cannot be doubted that an unfortunate impression will be created in America. Full information about German military plate-racks and photographs of the latest types were released to foreign correspondents in Berlin during the first week of the war, and it is being suggested that exaggerated secrecy about British plate-racks is really only a cloak to cover a lamentable scarcity of these engines.

Communique No. 3. 10.45 hours. Gunner Furr has at last successfully measured and marked off in pencil the first length of planking required, and heavy sawing is now going on all along the line. Gunner Price, as usual, is sitting on the other end of the wood. Gunner McEnty, having just repulsed a strong attack launched by Bombardier "Red" Mullett with the object of capturing our hammers, is now engaged in a heated discussion with Lance-Bombardier Morris on the subject of U-boats. McEnty maintains that the sinking of merchant ships without warning is, in the circumstances, a legitimate practice; the Lance-Bombardier, who falls back on forceful language when cornered, describes the new Nazi policy in other terms—as the opposite of legitimate, to be exact. Gunner Furr, laying aside his saw, adds his voice to the clamour. Gunner Price, as usual, is asleep. The debate continues.

Communique No. 4. 11.30 hours. A slight check has been experienced by our forces. Gunner Robinson, returning from a mysterious mission to a nearby dump, proudly exhibits a couple of old motor-car wheels and proceeds to outline his plans for attaching them to the structure. He appears to be under the impression that we are making a handcart of some kind. Taxed with this he admits it and even grows assertive under cross-examination. He says we are making a handcart. Captain Bailey, he declares, distinctly gave instructions that a handcart was to be constructed without delay. Lance-Bombardier Morris contests this. He says that Mr. ("Wait for the Three Pips") Manson ordered a plate-rack, and a plate-rack he shall have. Gunner Robinson replies that of course what the Lance-Bombardier says goes, but speaking for himself he wouldn't care to be in somebody's shoes when Captain Bailey comes to have a look at his handcart. This remark makes Lance-Bombardier Morris uneasy, and his standpoint becomes a good deal less rigid. He doesn't care, he says, whether they make a handcart or a plate-rack, but he thinks they ought to know which they are making before they make it. Gunner Price, waking up unexpectedly, fails to see the force of this. Give it wheels anyhow, he says, and then it's more than half-way to being a handcart, or alternatively, if a handcart isn't wanted, a wheeled plate-rack, probably the only one of its kind in existence. Without wheels, he points out, the apparatus when finished would be regarded as a fixture and therefore, in the event of our being moved to another station, have to be left behind for the new tenants; a mobile plate-rack could accompany us anywhere, even overseas.

Lance-Bombardier Morris at this point issued instructions to Gunner Price to put a sock in it, and this was done.

Communique No. 5. 12.0 hours. Intermittent sawing still continues. A visit to the front was paid at 11.45 hours by Captain Bailey, who asked how the cycle-shed was getting on. In spite of this reverse the morale of the troops remains excellent.

Communique No. 6. 12.15 hours. The enemy, in the shape of Bombardier "Red" Mullett, has scored a success. Beginning with skirmishing operations on our flanks, thought to presage another attempt upon our two hammers, he has made a sudden thrust against our rather weakly-held centre and possessed himself of the chisel, besides pointing out that the main plank upon which our whole superstructure is to rest actually forms part of the new hut they are going to build—as a temporary prison for captured German parachutists, rumour says. This piece of information is a more deadly blow even than the loss of the chisel. The fact is our troops have already sawn about six feet off the original piece of wood, which means either that a new piece will have to be obtained, or that the prison will have to be a couple of yards shorter than at present arranged. The latter seems on the whole the more likely solution.

Communique No. 7. 12.30 hours. Quiet now prevails along the entire front. Gunner McEnty has struck his thumb with a hammer. Gunner Furr has stepped on the only two pieces of wood so far joined together and broken them apart again, and Lance-Bombardier Morris, in a sudden gust of temper, has rolled the two car-wheels down the slope into the cook-house, where there is a distinct risk of their being used as food. Nobody, it is comforting to think, will detect any difference if they are.

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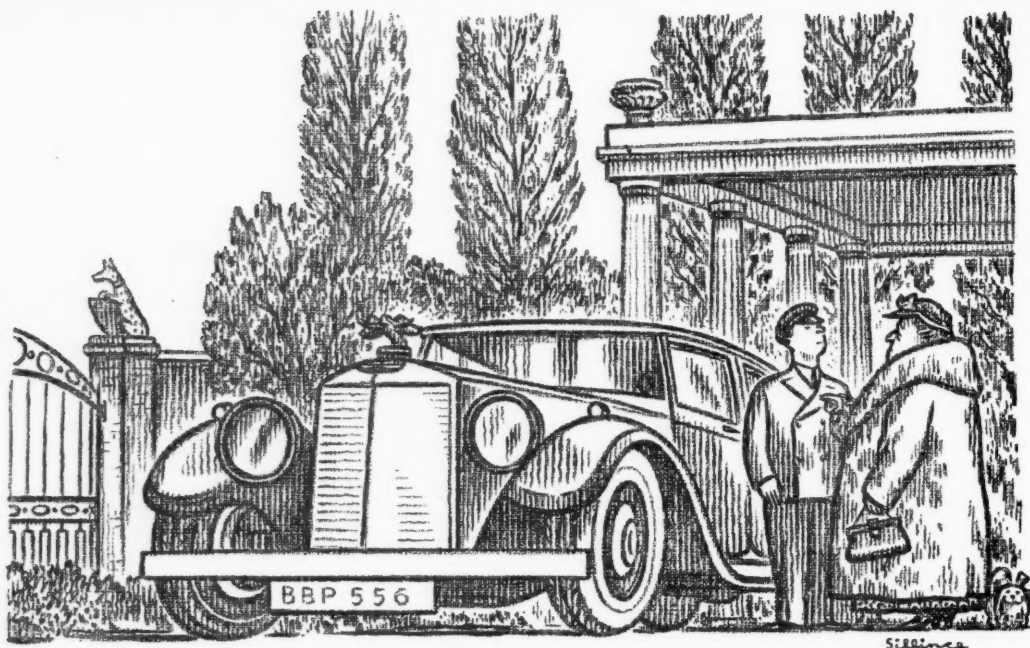
The Ministry of Information announces that good progress is being made with the construction of a special plate-rack for military use "somewhere in England."

H. F. E.



THE OFFER

"That's not a white flag. It has a dirty smudge on it."



"Couldn't we economise on petrol by not using all the horse-power, Murphy?"

"Mein Pamph"

AS we write the Shower of Leaflets, the Confetti Campaign, or, as our Mate wittily described it, "*Mein Pamph*," continues: and we suppose it is all right. But may we make a few timid suggestions?

First, might not our harmless offerings to the innocent Germans (with whom of course we have no quarrel whatever, beyond the trifling fact that they keep on breeding mad bulls and letting them loose) be a little more varied? Whatever the wording of "*Mein Bombs*" may be, the innuendo or remote hint is always the same—that is:

HA, HA! THIS IS ONLY A LEAFLET—
BUT IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN A BOMB.
HA, HA! HOW CLEVER WE ARE! AND
HOW KIND! HA, HA!

We are of course mere private citizens and idiots; but we are not yet persuaded, nor has any evidence yet publicly emerged, that this sort of thing has any instructive or melting effect on the average innocent German (with whom of course we have no quarrel whatever, beyond the trifling fact that for three generations and more he has, etc.). And the simple, though highly psychological, foundation of our doubt is this:

*The leaflet is not at all like a bomb—physically. It does not make a mess—it does not make anyone "jump"—it does not even make any marks. The dropping of three million small bags of soot or flour, for example (if it were possible), would be a much more convincing testimony both to the efficiency of the R.A.F. and the goodness of our hearts. And the Gestapo would have much more of a job removing the evidence from the citizens' walls and roofs. Three million custard-pies of course would be even better, especially if it could be arranged for them to fall on three million policemen, S.A. men, *gauleiters*, or majors. For the custard-pie is part of the international language, and speaks a mouthful every time.*

And if the custard-pie were considered vulgar, why not a few bags of nuts? The Germans (with whom we have no quarrel) would understand that.

* * * * *

But the leaflet clearly has come to stay, and we must be practical. One good suggestion has not received the attention it deserves—that *all* the leaflets dropped in a single excursion should not be of the same vintage.

Mix the bowling, boys! Study the mind of those who collect cigarette-cards or first editions. Get into your heads the notion of "rarity value." Where the leaflets are known to be all the same no one will want to look at his neighbour's, or keep his own, or send it on to his widowed mother. But suppose you mix up with the highfalutin ones just a few which say quite simply:

HITLER

WHAT A

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everyone will look about eagerly until he can get a first edition of that, and in the course of his search he will read lots of the others (so they should be varied too). But by the time these words appear all this no doubt will have been done: for we do *not* believe that our rulers are *quite* such noodles

as the common citizen is pleased to think them.

* * * * *

After that generous and moving tribute perhaps they will turn a genial eye to our next suggestion. We have not yet met anyone in London who could not have composed much better leaflets than those which have been dropped, and we do not wish to join so great a majority. Indeed, we think the stuff has had some merit. But there is just one leaflet that we should like to see descending here and there among the custard-pies and bags of nuts—and perhaps it should be the last.

With great respect to everyone, is it really any use explaining elaborately to the Germans (with whom we have no quarrel) that Hitler has lied to us and everybody else, and broken treaties as casually as other men break bread? The Germans *know* all that; and (though of course we have no quarrel with them and wild horses would not drag from us a single word of reproach or discourtesy towards our delightful enemies) we must say that they don't seem to care very much whether Hitler lies to us or not—*so long as it comes off*. What *does* touch the German

gizzard, surely, is the many ways in which he has lied to *them*, the ways in which he has failed to deliver the goods. This, then, is the kind of bomphlet we should like to drop (always supposing that anyone could induce us to go up in an aeroplane):

HEIL HITLER

"THE FUEHRER IS ALWAYS RIGHT"

HE SAID HE WOULD GIVE YOU BUTTER
HE HAS GIVEN YOU THE AUSTRIANS

HE SAID HE WOULD GIVE YOU MONEY
HE HAS GIVEN YOU THE CZECHS

HE SAID HE WOULD GIVE YOU SOAP
HE HAS GIVEN YOU THE POLES

YOU CANNOT EAT THE AUSTRIANS
YOU CANNOT CASH THE CZECHS
YOU CANNOT SHAVE WITH THE POLES

LAND OF
NO SOAP AND GLORY!

HEIL HITLER

"THE FUEHRER IS ALWAYS RIGHT"

Or the same thought could be put in verse:

You didn't want the Austrians, you didn't want the Czechs,
But you *would* like a little soap to wash your dirty necks;
You don't want Slovakia, you don't want the Poles,
But you *would* like a little bit of butter on your rolls.
And we can't undertake you'll be over-eating *much*
If he gives you the Belgians, the Danes and the Dutch;
But the Fuehrer's always right, and he'll satisfy your needs
By giving you the English, the French and the Swedes.

And here is a little one to mix with those:

DARLING GERMANS,
WE HAVE NO QUARREL
WITH YOU,
BUT
GOLLY!
WHAT A CROWD
OF
COWS!

A. P. H.



"Hullo! Why did you leave London?"

"Those confounded black-outs—couldn't get a wink of sleep."

At the Pictures

LIGHT MUSICAL STUFF

I CAN'T help it, *Second Fiddle* (Director: SIDNEY LANFIELD) is one sort of film that, when it's well done, I thoroughly enjoy. I imply the apology because, after all, nobody could defend *Second Fiddle* as a work of art; it's simply a misunderstanding-story punctuated by songs and (in this instance) skating. But it's acted and directed with extreme competence, the songs are by IRVING BERLIN, and much of the dialogue is funny. And the skating—

That of course means SONJA HENIE; here she is, as a Minnesota school-teacher who is chosen to play the leading part in the film version of a best-selling novel. TYRONE POWER is the publicity-man who thinks of the idea of linking her name with that of a falling star (played by RUDY VALLEE) in order, as it were, to hoist him up again. Unaware that the "romance" is a fake, she falls genuinely in love with the star; and what complicates matters more is that the publicity-man himself loves—but you don't need to be told how it ends.

It could, in fact, be very dreary stuff indeed; but there is an unexpected and genuine satirical bite in the whole treatment of the story. Moreover, I repeat, much of the dialogue is very funny and it's all put over admirably. Among the subsidiary players are EDNA MAY OLIVER, MARY HEALY and ALAN DINEHART; and all over the place are IRVING BERLIN's tunes, excellently done by all sorts of performers. I can't help it, that gives me pleasure too.

Now, though, we come to a film of more or less the same kind which I did not enjoy. *Variety* (and when are we going to be allowed to see *Variety* again? The last copy I have is dated September 6th. Does it reveal military secrets, or what?) guardedly observes about *Naughty But Nice* (Director: RAY ENRIGHT) that "film title is not particularly consistent with story content"; which is quite right, to put it mildly. A possible explanation is that this film was thought to be in sore need of something to make people go

to it; the title *Naughty But Nice*, believed to possess some absolute virtue, having been held in reserve for just such an emergency.

Well, certainly there's something



FIDDLE No. 1

Trudi Hovland SONJA HENIE

wrong with the picture. My impression is that it's what they call a "B" film made on what they call an "A" budget: good players and expensive incidentals wasted on a story and dialogue that are



A ZONE OF INFLUENCE

Prof. Hardwick DICK POWELL
Zelda Manion ANN SHERIDAN

invincibly second-rate. DICK POWELL is supposed to be a college professor of music who, having lived for twenty-eight years with three tame aunts, goes to New York to stay with a wild aunt

(HELEN BRODERICK) and gets involved in the world of popular music, of which he has hitherto disapproved. The theme is not unpromising; but the treatment is haphazard and without distinction. There are several incidents here—mostly depending on the stale old device of the very strong drink mistaken for a weak one—that really belong in a twenty-minute farce.

The professor is a "classicist" (he shows this by his ability to spout the Christian names and exact dates of any great composer who happens to crop up in conversation, and by nothing else), but the air of one of his symphonic compositions needs only to be given words by the heroine (GALE PAGE) for him to become a successful song-writer, complete with the ability to sing his own songs with a grasp of phrasing that no stern disapprover of popular music would really have the least conception of.

There are compensations: MAXIE ROSENBLOOM as a tough odd-job-man-butler; ANN SHERIDAN (the Menace, of course, GALE PAGE being the nice girl); Miss BRODERICK, already mentioned. But on the whole—no.

The best made, and I think the most enjoyable, of the others is *Stronger Than Desire* (Director: LESLIE FENTON)—

and goodness knows what that title means, either—which seems to be the old *Evelyn Prentice* story we saw MYRNA LOY and WILLIAM POWELL in years ago, with the names changed and VIRGINIA BRUCE and WALTER PIDGEON in the parts. The successful lawyer, the shot blackmailer, the lawyer's wife's confession—you know. But this is all very brightly and slickly done; ILKA CHASE—whom you may have heard "commentating" short fashion films—is very pleasant and amusing as the wife's friend, and LEE BOWMAN and ANN DVORAK excellent as the shiftless blackmailer and his unhappy wife.

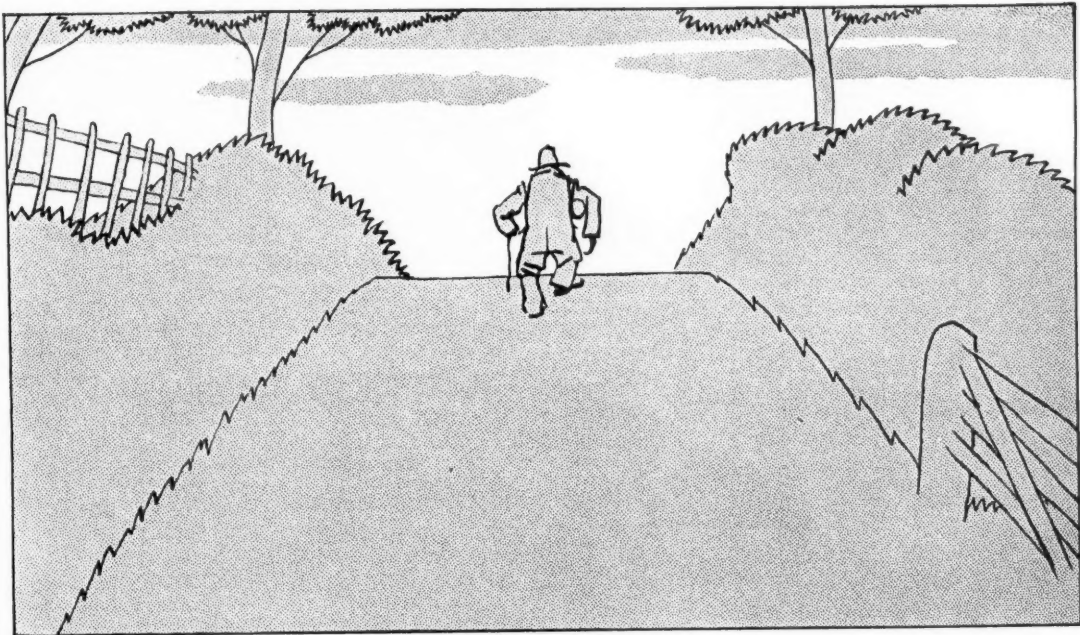
An Englishman's Home (Director: ALBERT DE COURVILLE) begins on a red-white-and-blue-lit screen and ends with "Land of Hope and Glory," which causes it to be applauded; but it seems to me an

unfortunate effort. It is the pre-last-war play, adapted to include radio beams, flights of bombers dropping armed parachutists, and one thing and another.

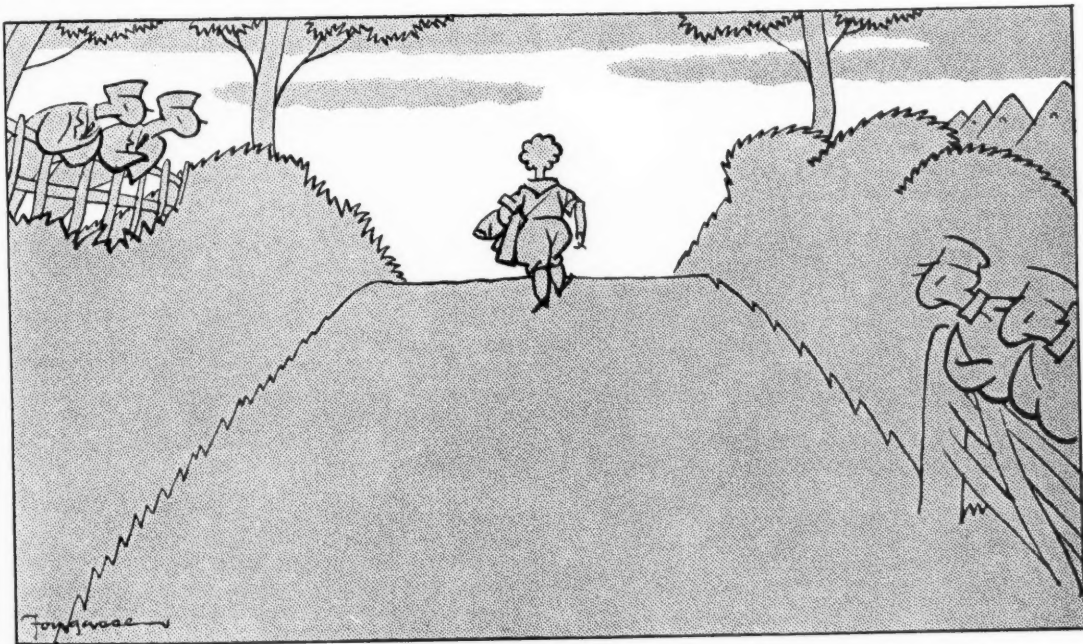
R. M.

THE CHANGING FACE OF BRITAIN

IX.—THE PLOUGHMAN HOMEWARD PLODS . . .



1



2



"I wonder how Charles Laughton will play me."

Behind the Lines

III

The Portrait Gallery

ERNST is a farmer, six foot four,
With enormous feet and a mild blue eye,
And a Hitler plaque on the stable-door
(And one of Ribbentrop in the sty).

Fräulein Truda is plain of face,
With a turned-up nose and an empty head,
And busts of Hitler all over the place
(And two of Goering under the bed).

Hausfrau Hilda's a woman of weight,
With a face that varies from mauve to pink,
And a portrait of Hitler on every plate
(And a study of Hess behind the sink).

Hans is a sailor, sailing west,
Tattooed with an artist's tender care;
There's an excellent Hitler on his chest
(And a speaking Goebbels I won't say where).

Herr Professor is pinched and small,
He dines with Anna at half-past-six;
His Fuehrer's figure adorns the wall
(And the ersatz sausage is wrapped in Frick's).

* * * * *

All these well-established faces
Fritz has learned to love and know;
Each its chosen corner graces . . .
But where does Little Red Father go?

A. A. M.

All in the Game

IT is a matter of considerable relief to everyone in Queen's Bishop that Mrs. Webblehurst is at last reconciled to the presence on her premises of The Children. "After all," she said as recently as yesterday, "it isn't their fault that they've never been taught any real manners at home, and a little soap and kindness is working wonders."

Now this is remarkable, for it is the first time since the children were deposited on her doorstep by an apologetic but helpless billeting-officer that she has allowed any kind word to pass her lips in public. She made it quite plain from the very first that in her view the devastation of Poland was a trivial upset in comparison with the havoc which was about to be made in Queen's Bishop by her own invaders. Furthermore, she alleged, the arrival of these two particular little boys at her home was no accident. It had been maliciously planned by a man in the Home Office named Jackson with whom Mr. Webblehurst had once held a ferocious argument in a boarding-house at Frinton, and who had nursed his spite until the opportunity had now arisen to force on his adversaries the dirtiest, noisiest, most ill-mannered boys in the British Isles.

It was no good assuring her that it was highly improbable that Jackson had anything to do with it. The children, she said, flamboyantly refusing all comfort, were her Load and she must bear it as loyally as possible.

"My only consolation," she said, "is that if it hadn't been the children it might have been a Civil Servant. And everyone," she added with a nuance that was rather lost on us, "knows what Civil Servants are. You *can* put boys to bed *sober*." We would all like to know what dark period of Mrs. Webblehurst's life inspired this scandalous imputation and whether Jackson had anything to do with it.

But in the days that followed she might have been grateful to exchange her Load for a whole houseful of Civil Servants. "I don't suppose," she said with an air of heavy martyrdom, "that if children want to pretend they're cowboys and Red Indians it's any business of mine to convince them that they're not. But when they turn my drawing-room into a ranch and tell me that the Red Indians are sacking it I do feel that I've a right to put my foot down."

I didn't see Mrs. Webblehurst again for a few days, but when I did I ventured to ask her again a little timorously about her children. "Don't mention them!" she commanded me firmly. "Don't mention them! Only yesterday they covered my entire lounge carpet with bucketfuls of wet sand. They said they were playing at A.R.P. I've told them that in future they must play all their games in the garden."

Though this doubtless seemed to be a wise precaution at the time, it turned out to be very much otherwise; for within two days the Load had taken advantage of Mrs. Webblehurst's absence at a bazaar to provide her with the nucleus of a trench. As they had dug it, however, in the middle of Mr. Webblehurst's treasured lawn and reinforced it with what used to be the rockery, their thoughtfulness was hardly appreciated.

We all wondered how it would end, but none of us was prepared for the astonishing transformation of Mrs. Webblehurst which has come about.

She descended on me in the post office yesterday from a great cloud of good-humour and benevolence. "It all shows," she expounded enthusiastically, "how everything works for the best. I admit I have been a little put out occasionally

by the high spirits of the children. But if I hadn't had to forbid them to play in the house they might never have made such a shambles of my lawn. And if I hadn't had to forbid them to go on the lawn they would never have started to dig up the rose-garden. And if they hadn't dug up the rose-garden," she added with impressive emphasis, "they would never have found the diamond brooch which I must have dropped there the last time I wore it! And if it hadn't been for the children it would never have been found!"

This morning I walked out of curiosity down the lane which passes Mrs. Webblehurst's house. No doubt encouraged by their previous success, the children were excavating further without interruption. The smaller one was diligently uprooting Mrs. Webblehurst's proudest asters while the other leaned on the gate and watched him tolerantly. "What are you playing at?" I asked the less active one. It looked to me like navy and foreman.

But it wasn't. "Hidden Treasure," the boy replied promptly.

"Ah!" I said. "And why aren't *you* digging?"

"Young Albert's turn to look this time. He hid it last week."

"Hid what?"

"Sort of ornament we found in the old woman's bedroom," the child informed me. "Took three days to find it, but she gave me half-a-crack when I did. This week," he added, pointing to his toiling companion, "young Albert's trying to find where I've put the old bloke's tie-pin. Then that might be half-a-crack for him too."

Somehow I hope Mrs. Webblehurst isn't disillusioned.

"So the Long Night . . ."

"SO the long night wore on." Delicious phrase!

Where did I meet you first? Some schoolboy story?

Some moving-picture caption in the days

When movie captions still retained their glory?

Be that as may. You rise to strike a chord in

My memory and pass; but this I swear—

I never knew till I became a warden

How long a night could wear.

Five hours has struck—and sounded somewhat grimly;

I came on duty, friends, at twenty-two

And since have sat, my candle burning dimly,

And sat and sat with nothing else to do;

The chair's not bad, the Post is warm and cosy,

There's still some air (though most of it is smoke),

But he who once was vigilant grows dozy—

And can you blame the bloke?

What of the night? The log-book keeps the tally;

Police looked in at twenty-three ought-nine;

At nought-fifteen Headquarters made a sally

And rang me up (they said) to test the line;

At one I checked equipment—respirator,

Suit, boots and curtain, gloves and anti-dim;

And once, at two, and once three long hours later

I dialled dear old TIM.

That's all . . . I am not one of those who guzzle

Sweet biscuits and destroy themselves with tea;

I cannot see to do the crossword-puzzle

Or read or write; short naps are not for me;

We have a wireless, but it gets no stations—

And anyway no programme starts till six;

I cannot knit; I will *not* take up Patience;

What can I do, then? Nix.

Raiders who will do anything but raid;

Defence all ready but without occasion;

How weary is the lot of wardens made

Since War began his idiot invasion!

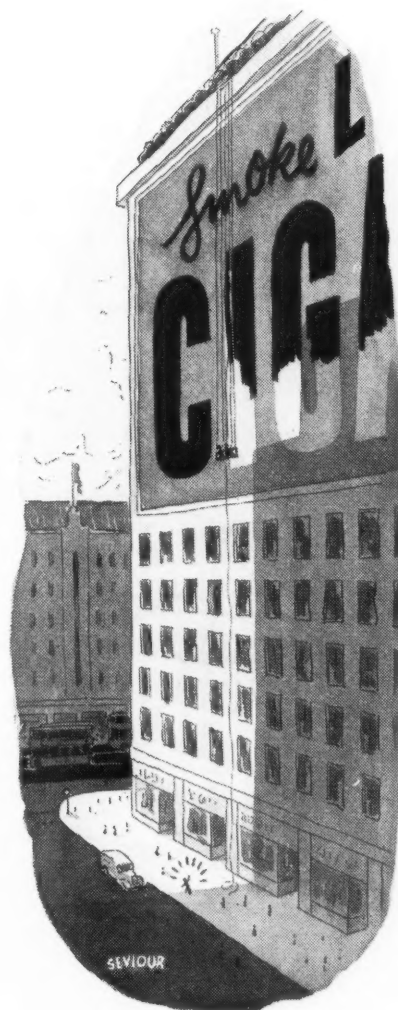
Well, war is war, and this one's for the winning,

And we shall win the blasted thing anon;

Meantime, as I remarked at the beginning,

"So the long night wore on."

H. B.



"Hey, Joe—you forgot your respirator."



POPULAR MISCONCEPTIONS—A CORNER OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION

With the A.F.S.

Girlish Laughter

ONE thing a good auxiliary fireman must never do is to have ideas above his station. I now have none of these. I don't think I shall be helping the enemy too much if I break the news that my sub-station has sand-bagged itself irretrievably inside a girls' school. Even when the war is over there will be no way of getting it out again. But it is a comfortable girls' school and we have no complaints. The girls have flown.

In spite of the ease with which we have managed the move, however, it marks a big change in habit. For one thing, I had never before slept in a headmistress's study. The first time I did so I confess it gave me a tremendous and rather awful kick. To lay oneself down at midnight in daring deshabille with one's pillow propped against a headmistress's desk is an experience for which it is almost worth going to war.

I find that very strange dreams follow. The one which comes most often is of a gaunt figure in a plain stuff dress reaching well beyond the insteps. She strides in stiffly and sits down at the desk—my desk. For a minute or two she

does nothing more than breathe harshly through her nose. Then she unanchors her pince-nez from one of those gold salmon-reels worn high on the bosom, whips them out on a fathom or so of cable, and presses the bell with a bony and determined thumb.

"Send me Agnes Packhorse," she says in a voice as cold as a raspberry split. Agnes comes in immediately, a chubby child with pigtailed and a pleasantly soiled face. The headwoman looks at her as if she were a termite at the other end of Australia.

"Agnes Packhorse," she hisses, making certain the child is quite clear about her own identity, "I am grievously disappointed in you. I am more. I feel I have been betrayed."

"Ever so sorry, Miss Oxtail," Agnes murmurs. It is obvious from her manner that this is not the first time she has had to listen to this kind of nonsense.

"There is a code of honour in this school," Miss Oxtail goes on, "which is our greatest glory. It is the pride alike of past and present. You have trampled on it. Yesterday,

for the fourth time this term, you blew your nose in Great Passage. You will not be warned again, Agnes Packhorse. And you will be debarred from jam for eight weeks."

At this point things become surprisingly dramatic. Agnes, instead of muttering, "Oo, Miss Oxtail!" as you would expect, suddenly picks up an open jar of ink and delights me by slinging its entire contents in Miss Oxtail's face. It is red ink, always. Just as Miss Oxtail is rising to her feet, looking like some exotic vegetable trying to express a very difficult thought, the dream invariably fades out. I quote it at length only as an illustration of the extraordinary tricks which war plays with the subconscious; and I hasten to say I have little doubt that mine is slandering the real Miss Oxtail, who is probably a fascinating girl, plus two at golf and a member of half the night-clubs in London. After all, education is advancing all the time.

Living in a girls' school has charms of its own. One's first bath in a bathroom with **FOR MISTRESSES ONLY** on a large brass plate on the door is somehow something to remember. Wherever you go you find funny little notices telling you what not to do. **DO NOT WHISTLE ON THE STAIRS. DO NOT FORGET TO FOLD YOUR TUNICS. DO NOT THROW WET TOWELS ON THE FLOOR. DO NOT JOSTLE IN THE DOORWAY.** There are dozens of these clarion negatives strewn about the place. At least once a week I make a point of going right round the school disobeying them one by one, for I find that after doing so I feel a much better and cleaner auxiliary fireman.

Naturally the auxiliary firewomen on our sub-station (the W.A.F.S. and S.T.R.A.Y.S. is their semi-official title) come in for a good deal of obloquy on the score of the quaint ways in which their sex is brought up; their usual reply is that from what they are seeing of co-education at the

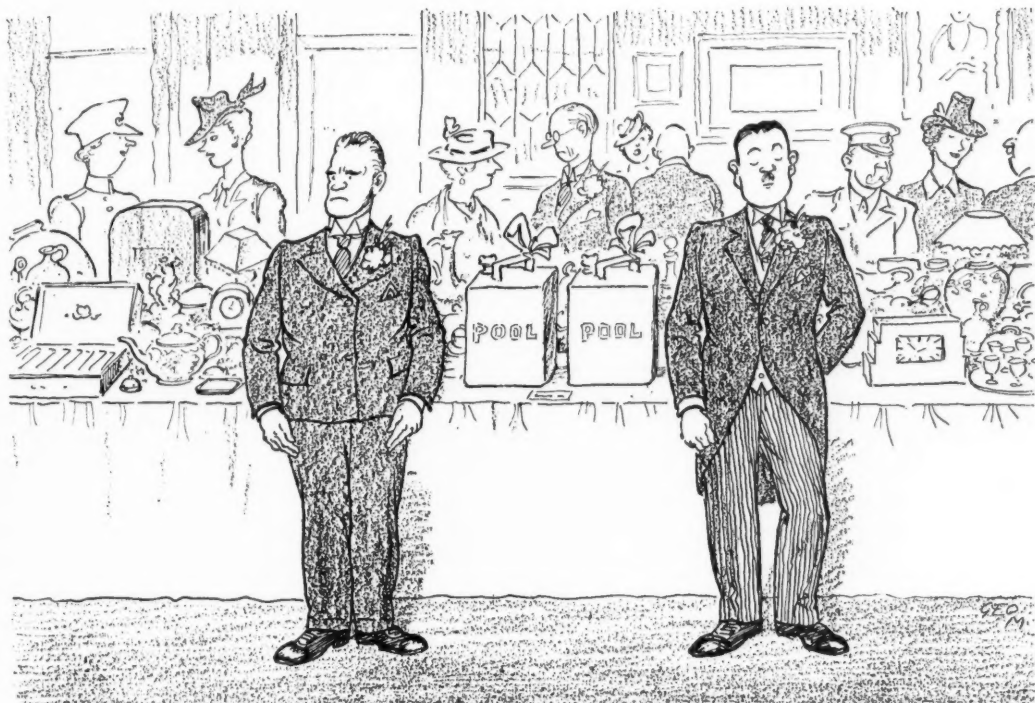
moment the older methods are vastly preferable. I should like to let you into a lot of secrets about the W.A.F.S., but at all costs we must remember the enemy is everywhere, even among my readers. I can safely say that the tea they make is magnificent. The W.A.F.S., I mean.

This morning a most disturbing situation arose. A number of us were sitting in the watch-room bemoaning the paucity of good safe fires when suddenly we raised our noses like a prize litter at Cruft's and looked at each other with horror and alarm. If there is one thing which brings a fire station a bad name quicker than another it is a burst of flames pouring through the roof, and that was what our noses told us was about to happen to ours. The smell came and went in a way which suggested a lively and well-fanned blaze. To most of us the headlines: "A.F.S. Sub-station Burns to a Cinder—Sad End of a Girls' School" seemed a fair certainty for the evening papers. Cramming on our steel helmets we began a thorough search of the building, which only stopped when it was discovered that the gardener had chosen the wrong window and the wrong wind under which to cremate the rubbish of the ages. As a charming vote of confidence in the gallantry we should have shown had we been able, the W.A.F.S. brewed us a special pot of tea.

We needed it.

I have an axe to grind with the L.C.C. Mine has not yet arrived, in spite of appeals to authority on forms of every primary colour. Those who have actually got axes tell me they make it quite impossible to sit down, but all the same I have a strong feeling that you never know when you might want to hack your way out of a headmistress's study.

ERIC.



Mr. PUNCH'S HOSPITAL COMFORTS FUND

You are asked to-day to remember and to help the Red Cross. You are asked to think and to think in good time of the wounded. At any moment their needs may become imperative. They will not consider themselves heroes, they will not complain; they will be those who have neither fallen in action nor come safely through the ordeal, but are part of the reparable human wastage of war; we shall hear them speaking again—the less seriously disabled—in the language long ago familiar to us: "I got my packet at —; I was luckier than some," and yet there will be months of pain in front of them before they can take their place on active service or in civilian life once more.

But even the great organisation of the Red Cross, supported by the unsparing devotion of doctors and nurses, and all the resources of the hospitals, will not suffice to meet fully the manifold variety and the complicated nature of the injuries that war entails. Even what might appear to be a simple wound—and the writer speaks here from first-hand knowledge—may require many experimental and unusual appliances before a satisfactory cure can be obtained; and the numbers in need of such assistance may be suddenly and unexpectedly too great for our medical staffs to deal with as they would wish.

It was for this reason that in the years between 1914 and 1918 the Kensington War Hospital Supply Depot was set up; and there are innumerable testimonies to the value of the work done by this Institution, carried out by voluntary helpers who made dressings, splints, crutches, bandages and supports for limbs to lighten the lot of those who suffered in hospitals here and abroad. Starting at the beginning of 1915 with ten workers, there were later enlisted in its services nearly five thousand volunteers of whom one thousand were in daily attendance, and eventually there were sent to hospitals £350,000 worth of surgical appliances, dressings and clothes for the use of the sick and wounded on various Fronts.

And now for the present emergency.

It may be said in the words of the old proverb that "a stitch in time saves nine," and in all earnestness Mr. Punch asks his readers without delay to be generous and to spare some contribution not only to the Red Cross but to a further fund that may supply to any and every hospital in this country or in France materials of every description—wool, rubber, flannel, linen, metal or wood—required for hospital work in order to lessen or alleviate pain and assist recovery. The casualties foreseen, as we are only too well aware, may be not only military but civilian, for in some circumstances all may be in the battle line and exposed to the attacks of the enemy.

The proposal then is to buy materials in bulk and to distribute wherever and whenever the demand arises and is most urgent. Every penny subscribed will be used for the comfort of patients, and no expenses whatever will be deducted. Detailed information will be furnished to all subscribers as to the nature and progress of the work; and though we know well that these are days of privation and self-denial for all, we yet ask you, those who can, to send us donations, large or small, according to your means; for experience in the last war has proved a hundred times over how urgent may be the call and how invaluable is the assistance that can be rendered. Will you please address all contributions and inquiries to:—Punch Hospital Comforts Fund, 10 Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4.

EVOE.



IN A GOOD CAUSE

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Impressions of Parliament

Synopsis of the Week

Monday, October 2nd.—Commons: Finance Bill given Second Reading.

Tuesday, October 3rd.—Lords: Debate on Young People's Welfare.

Commons: War Survey by P.M. and Debate on British Attitude to Peace Terms.

Wednesday, October 4th.—Lords: Debates on Ministry of Information and Peace Terms.

Commons: Finance Bill taken in Committee.

Monday, October 2nd.—Colonel WEDGWOOD, anxious that the Government should find out from our Minister from Warsaw exactly what Nazi air-raids were like, was told by Mr. BUTLER that all such information was being collected, and further assured that anyone who came here would receive the reception they deserved.

If one were allowed a short excursion into the past it would be as amusing to break the cost of a modern war to Mr. PITT as it would be to describe its preposterous technique to WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR or HANNIBAL. Moving the Second Reading of the Finance Bill, Captain CROOKSHANK quoted very happily from Mr. PITT, who apparently said on December 3rd, 1798: "No sacrifices have been thought too great for us to make. The common feeling of danger has produced a common spirit of exertion, and we have cheerfully come forward to surrender part of our property as salvage not merely for recovering ourselves but for the general recovery of mankind." The cost of one battleship would have taken Mr. PITT a long way in a campaign, it is pleasant to remember.

The debate was not very spirited, for the Labour Party, naturally delighted by such realistic soaking of the rich, rather formally resented the extra sugar tax, the reduction in allowances for children and the penny on beer, in that order. Their habitual plea for a capital levy, however, found respect if not support from Mr. BOOTHBY, who regarded something of the kind as inevitable if the war dragged on, and who felt that by the savage increase in the income-tax the CHANCELLOR had killed a great deal of business

stone dead for a trivial return. Sir RALPH GLYN castigated the Government Departments for waste, and Sir THOMAS MOORE earned Mr. P.'s R.'s approval by pressing for an impost on

other that imported cosmetics were already on the prohibited list. Bicycles remain, and so do tandems; and Mr. P.'s R. knows of an eight-seater which would be fine game for the marks of the revenue.

Tuesday, October 3rd.—Reluctantly Lord DE LA WARR moved the Second Reading in the Lords of a Bill to suspend the operation of the 1936 Education Act, which would have increased the school-leaving age from fourteen to fifteen as from September 1st. Social improvements are the first victims of international gangsterdom. Later the Bishop of WINCHESTER initiated a good short debate on the way in which the war had added to the whole problem of juvenile welfare, and Lord DE LA WARR announced that he was setting up a special branch of his Department to consider this matter.

In the Commons, Mr. CHAMBERLAIN's fifth survey of the progress of the war covered the cynical division of the Polish swag by Russia and Germany and gave a most satis-

factory account of the Forces. Pointing out that the partition of Poland was by no means necessarily to the ultimate advantage of Germany, he declared that the agreement between Moscow and Berlin made no difference to our war aims. A vague passage in the Russo-German declaration suggested a proposal for peace accompanied by a scarcely veiled threat: no threat would induce the Allies to abandon their purpose, and no assurances from the present German Government were acceptable. The rule of violence had to cease.

As for the war, a large British army was in France, the R.A.F. had already engaged in heroic combat above the Siegfried Line, the convoy system was working so well that no ship in its care had yet been lost, the Dominions were rallying magnificently, National Registration had gone off smoothly, and, finally, it had been decided that the Press would once again get its news direct from Government Departments, instead of through the Ministry of Information, though this would still issue news as well.

Mr. ATTLEE and Sir ARCHIBALD SINCLAIR agreed that only a real peace was worth having, and Mr. LLOYD

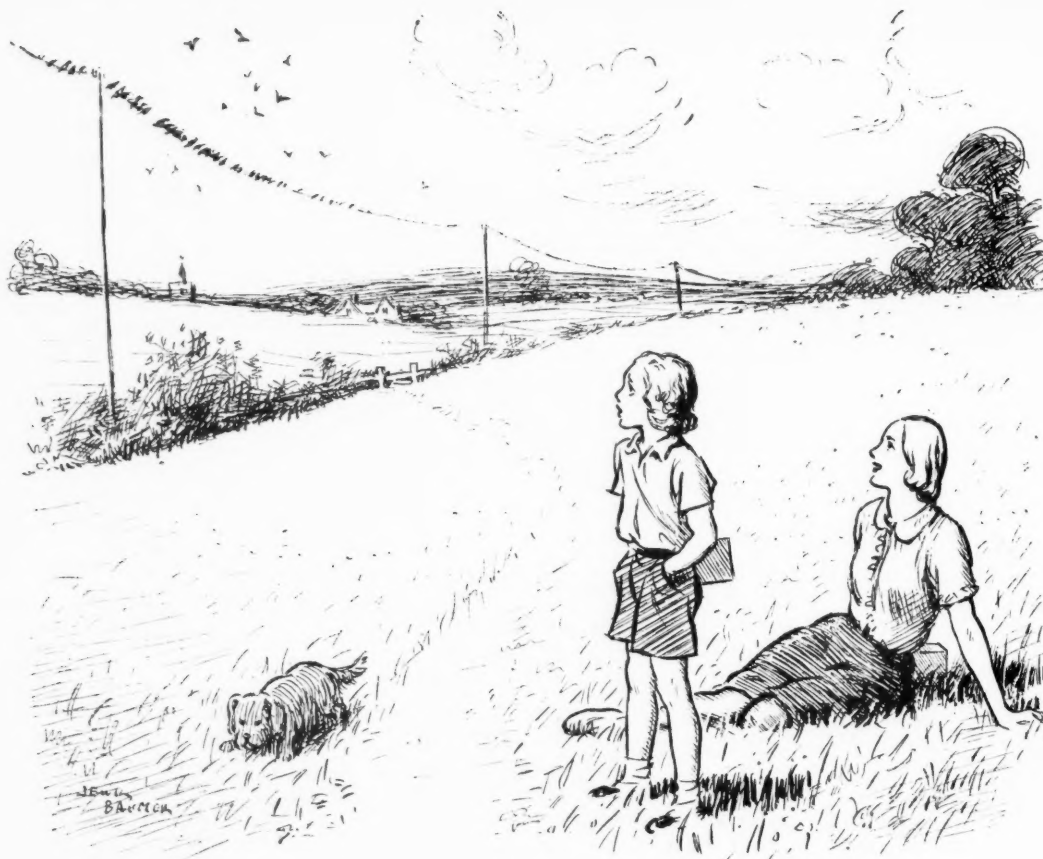


MR. LLOYD GEORGE, IN HIS RÔLE AS ELDER STATESMAN, THOUGH ADMONISHED BY MR. DUFF COOPER—

cosmetics and bicycles; but the CHANCELLOR reminded one that A.R.P. would not have seemed over-organised had there been serious raids, and the



—IS ADORED BY LORD MOTTISTONE.



"Poor little things—I suppose they won't be able to go abroad this winter."

GEORGE then rent the House in twain with a speech in which, while he agreed that HITLER's word was valueless and that the conquest of Poland was unacceptable, he begged the Government to give very careful consideration to the peace proposals which everyone was expecting and which he believed might contain a substantial concession. At the same time he urged that we should treat Italy and Russia purely as neutrals, and asked for a secret session of the House. When he sat down the P.M. rose again to say that he remained unconvinced of the value of a secret session, but that the House would have an opportunity of considering any peace offer which might be made.

The storm was then let loose. Mr. DUFF COOPER "deeply deplored" Mr. LLOYD GEORGE's speech, because it was capable of such dangerous misrepresentation abroad—what sort of terms would be offered by a Germany

flushed with a sensational victory, he asked? Mr. GRENFELL considered the speech a "gross error in timing." Sir HENRY PAGE CROFT also thought it deplorable, and so did Sir H. MORRIS-JONES and Mr. VYVYAN ADAMS. But on the other hand Mr. BUCHANAN congratulated Mr. LLOYD GEORGE on his bravery, Mr. BARR referred to Mr. LLOYD GEORGE's noble courage and Sir CHARLES CAYZER to his gallant speech.

Wednesday, October 4th.—In answer to various questions in the Lords this afternoon, Lord MACMILLAN described the drastic purge which was reducing the Ministry of Information to half its size and, defending the B.B.C., reminded the House that in addition to the Home Service a World Service was being maintained for twenty-two hours a day and also a European Service for nineteen hours a day. Twenty-eight news bulletins were being broadcast daily in fifteen languages.

After a short debate on the British attitude to peace terms in which Lord SNELL laid down the excellent definition that Germany had lots of brains but no understanding, the Archbishop of YORK spoke of the spirit of dedication of our young people to a great ideal, Lord PONSONBY condemned the war as useless and Lord MOTTISTONE described Mr. LLOYD GEORGE's speech as "reasonable, timely and fearless," the FOREIGN SECRETARY restated the Government's position.

In the Commons, Mr. EDEN announced a meeting of Dominions Ministers shortly to be held in London and Mr. CHURCHILL that the Navy intended to rely on voluntary recruitment. Later the CHANCELLOR explained repercussions of the new income-tax so complex that it is good news to learn that a short official guide to its ramifications will soon be published. "Bankruptcy Without Tears," it might well be called.

Registration

"ONE doesn't mind being registered," said Mrs. Johnson-Clitheroe, taking the last chocolate éclair from under the very nose of the Vicar with an abstracted smile and a dexterity born of long practice, "but one feels that it was unnecessary to introduce the religious element."

We all looked at her in surprise, because we had all received our National Registration forms the very same morning, at the hands of a very charming lady whose manner was only marred by an attempt to appear efficient which, to say the least of it, sat ill upon her. Because surely efficiency could not be attained with a fountain pen that when opened sent a stream of ink over the drawing-room carpet? Then, again, her absolute insistence that I was Mr. Boffin of 14, The Ridgeway—a thing I have never been and hope to avoid to the end of my days—was hardly consistent with any ordinary standard of efficiency. But none of us had seen any reference to religion in the form.

"I'm sure there wasn't any," said the Vicar, "and personally I think it was rather a pity. There are one or two people whom I should really like to nail down, and I don't suppose they would dare tell a lie on an official form. That artist, for instance, at 'Mon Repos.' After beer he says he is a Presbyterian, but after champagne, in which he indulges whenever he sells a picture, he leans to Buddhism."

Mrs. Johnson-Clitheroe looked at the Vicar as if she thought that his interruption had been rather unnecessary.

"It asks quite clearly a question that, addressed to people like us," she said, "can only refer to the After Life. I refer to Section VI. Am I, it asks, a Colliery Onsetter (below), or a Colliery Lampman (above)? Now the lady can see quite clearly that in this life I am not one or the other, so obviously it refers to the future state."

Edith interrupted, because once we get talking about politics or religion sparks are apt to fly.

"The thing that worried me," she said, "was under Section V where it asks us to say whether we are Fly-Frame Tenters. Personally I have never framed a fly, and even if I framed it I should leave it at that and not tent it. After all, flies have to live like the rest of us."

The Vicar broke in eagerly.

"My own feeling on seeing the form," he said, "was one of wistful

regret at having missed so many opportunities. Vicars have their use, no doubt, but my boyish ambitions crowded to my mind, those 'might-have-beens that never were.' Forgotten desires that were like beacon lights in the halcyon days of careless boyhood loomed up again before me as I saw the list of trades attached to the form. I might have been a better man if I had yielded to that early impulse to become a Press Stamp Operator Aluminium Hollow-ware, a Builder's Estimator, a Pneumatic Driller (Ship-building), or, beyond anything else, a Head Carder. To card other people's heads is surely one of the noblest works to which man can dedicate himself. It brings out that hidden fineness that perhaps otherwise remains dormant until we sink into the grave."

"My only trouble," said Colonel Hogg, "is to know whether or not to describe myself as a Heavy Worker. I certainly work, but is sixteen stone in one's socks really heavy or merely mediocre?"

Our Own Secret Weapon

"R.A.F. pilots flying over German territory have dropped 18 million pamphlets through the bomb hatches of their aircraft, states the Ministry of Information to-day."

Worcester Paper.

Violation of Danish Neutrality?

"BULLETS FALL ON HAMLET"

Daily Paper Headline.



"Can you still see her, Jake?"



"Really, dear, is this the only way you can show your patriotism?"

Family Affairs

WHEN I was young there were six of us in the family, four brothers and three sisters. As our parents were dead, none of us had any idea how old we were. Indeed, it was not until my youngest brother, Ronald, began to grow a moustache that we wondered whether we ought to leave school.

The village schoolmaster tried to reassure us—we were the only children on his register and he had reason to believe that the authorities would

close his school if he were left without pupils. But the thought persisted.

We discussed the matter among ourselves every evening for some years, but could reach no conclusion. Eventually we decided that my eldest brother, Luke, should write a letter to the Board of Education, stating the case as fully as his limited abilities would allow. Not unnaturally, we were rather excited when the reply came, telling us that the Board was unable to deal with the matter, but

suggesting that we write to Somerset House.

This led to a lengthy correspondence extending over a period of years. To begin with, we had some difficulty in persuading the officials that we did not know the names of our father and mother, or where they were married. On the school register we were called Jones, while in the village we were known as Top-End, from the name of our house. On the other hand, a very old man who remembered my father declared that he had always been referred to as Lofty.

When we had explained this we were asked to discover where our parents had been buried. We replied that, as far as we knew, they had not been buried but had died natural deaths. This did not satisfy the people at Somerset House, for they then asked us in what churchyard or cemetery they had been buried after death, and in what name. This of course we did not know.

After a great deal of this sort of thing we were told to try to find out from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners whether any of us had been baptized. It took us eighteen months to find the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, and when we had found them they told us that if we wanted to be baptized the correct procedure was to notify the rector of our parish. We then went into long and involved explanations which eventually came to nothing.

It was just about this time that my middle sister, Emily, announced one evening that she had dreamt three nights running that her name was Brown. We were overjoyed, because this seemed to solve the whole problem. That same day Luke wrote again to Somerset House announcing this new piece of evidence. But Somerset House did not seem to attach as much importance to it as we did. However, after some wrangling we got them to go through their list of Browns to discover a Mr. and Mrs. Brown with six children. This took them quite a long time, but it succeeded. We had a letter telling us that they had found a very likely pair of Browns with six children, and would we send them a list of our names so that they could be checked.

Alas! at this moment of triumph our hopes were dashed; for we found on counting our names that there were seven of us. This was a great shock to us, for we had all been under the impression that there were only six.

Where the matter would have ended and whether any of us would have ever left school I cannot say. But one day a letter arrived from the Government,

telling us that for many years we had been scheduled as an orphanage and had been receiving money from the State. They did not blame us for it as, indeed, it was not our error: but they made it quite clear that the money would have to be repaid.

We were at our wits' end, as none of us had ever thought of making money, but another letter from the blue saved us. A few days later a letter from the Ministry of Pensions informed us that our claim to the Old Age Pension had been recognised and that all twelve of us could immediately draw it. So we are now repaying on the instalment plan the money we had for being an orphanage.

Even now, however, we do not know whether we can leave school.

Where was the light and joyous crowd
That to that course did erst repair?
I yelled the question out aloud
And echo answered "Where?"

From dreary tee to dreary green
A few slow dreary couples crawled;
Certes, my eye has rarely seen
A change that more appalled.

I gazed awhile as one who dreamed
And, frankly, as I passed away
Golf, from a different aspect, seemed
A silly game to play.

That I should utter words like these!
I grovel deeply in my shame,
Yet, take it any way you please,
It looked a silly game.

But hollow hearts may wear a mask,
And on your day, if naught go ill,
It shall be even as you ask;
We will go forth, O Bill.

We will recapture ancient joys
And gain new easement for the soul,
And at the worst as counterpoise
There'll be the nineteenth hole.
DUM-DUM.

"The police are anxious to receive reports of the audibility of the sirens from members of the public—especially from people who fail to hear them."—*Daily Dispatch*.

Listeners are specially asked to report the exact time at which they do not hear the sirens.

Golf—On and Off

MY pure and admirable Bill,
I note that for your next
day off
You'd have us twain display our skill
(Or otherwise) at golf.

It's true that since a certain date
Your radiant clubs, your bag of price,
From causes needless to relate
Have not been off the ice.

But though the skies are dark with
wrack
(A striking metaphor) 'tis plain
With what stern glee you hope to smack
A friendly ball again.

Bill, till that evil hour drew nigh,
How oft we two have made our
round,
How leapt the ball to yonder sky,
How madly sought the ground;

How wondrous was the luck you had;
I never clearly understood
Why mine should be so wholly bad
And yours so vilely good.

And then with what a goodly throng—
Stout fellows of the nobler sort—
The course was peopled all day long
In amity and sport;

And when the nineteenth hole was
gained
Where all must quench a thirsty need,
What yarns were there, what cups we
drained;
Bill, those were days indeed.

Yestreen by that familiar spot
I in an hour of leisure ranged;
The place—believe me, Bill, or not—
Its very look had changed.



"... and this is where our Botany Mistress lives."



"My nephew has just been made Minister without Portfolio, so I'm sending him this for his birthday."

Ah, the English!

"DARLING, I'm so worried!"

"Are you? Why?"

"Oh, it's the war."

"Oh, the war. But why are you worried, darling? Anything special about the war?"

"Well, yes. It's the air-raid warnings. I'm quite by myself at the very top of the building, and it's one of those rather inflammable old houses, and so I shall have to go out to a shelter, and *not* just sit in the basement."

"And isn't there one?"

"Oh, yes, any amount. But I feel it's going to be so difficult to know what to put on at a minute's notice and more or less in the dark."

"But, darling, you can get the most marvellous outfits. Kind of house-coat-dressing-gown-trouser-pyjama-playsuits that you just step into and zip up, and they've got tremendous pockets that you can put your powder-puff and lipstick and comb into."

"How perfectly splendid! Though,

as a matter of fact, I see you can get gas-mask containers with a place for lipstick and powder in box-calf."

"There are quite a lot of rather good gas-mask containers. Black velvet with diamanté for the evening. You might get one of those. And there's another thing, darling—you know one's told to carry something *white* in the dark, because it's all different now about pedestrians, and motorists have got to try and *not* run over them more than they can help."

"Well, I *do* think it's a changing world! Fancy! What sort of white thing shall you carry?"

"Darling, I can't imagine. A girl I know is using a frightfully heavy magnolia-white make-up and putting a dead-white powder on her nose, and she thinks that ought to be enough; but I'm not sure."

"I think I shall wear a white turban. You see, that's another thing I'm worried about."

"Oh, dear, you have got a lot on your mind! What is it?"

"Well, it's the air-raids again. You see, I simply *have* to roll up my hair in curlers every night or I shouldn't be fit to be seen in the morning; and *how*, I ask you, am I to go and sit in an air-raid shelter, perhaps for hours, with a whole crowd of people if I'm in curlers?"

"But, darling, couldn't you *possibly* take them out before you start?"

"But, darling, I feel that once those sirens and things start hooting or warbling one'll somehow find one's in a hurry."

"Yes, I see. Well, then, you must have a smart turban and just twist it round your head, curlers and all, and if you get it to match whatever you mean to wear it'll look as if it was all part of the outfit."

"Darling, you're marvellous! I *do* feel it's all going to be much easier now, and I shall simply step out to the air-raid shelter quite, quite calmly, which after all is what we're told to do."

"Quite right, darling. And don't forget—if it's a *gas*-raid you needn't bother about any make-up before you start, because it would really be rather waste under a gas-mask, don't you feel?"

E. M. D.

"The disgrace of Goebbels, Nazi propaganda Minister, appears to be confirmed by information which reached Zurich from Berlin, according to a Havas Agency message to Paris. 'It is probable,' says the message, 'that he will be allowed to disappear gradually.'"
—Daily Paper.

Like an old soldier.

Picking

TAKE up your baskets,
Kitbags and caskets,
Handkerchiefs and hand-bags
And uncompleted sandbags;
The country is calling
Its youth to go puff-balling.
Mushrooms are sprouting;
Nightly there's an outing.
Insects inside
Come up to scratch when fried.
But let beginners try to find
Only the simple pink-lined kind.
Those for the more successful meal
Should peel.
However great your hungers,
Feed not on false fungus;
Seek the parasols that hide
Shyly in tuft and ride,
Being anxious for the most
Not to end their days on toast,
Nor desiring to be taken
Off and billeted with bacon.
Here and there the mighty stretch up,
Suitable for ketchup,
Or huddle on a Fairy Ring.
Why not go blackberrying?
The nice ones are too high
And the near imbued with fly,
But with your crooked stick
You can pick the pick,
Though brambles have embraced
Your waistcoat and your waist
And will keep grappling.
Why not go crab-appling?
Why not go nutting
In some bush abutting?
Nuts with ragged stays'll
Probably be hazel;
Those with prickly vest,
Sweet or Spanish chest;
The nut in the green container
(Famous as a finger-stainer,

Although beneath
This and still another sheath
It isn't all nut)
Will be the walnut.
Do not savour the contents
Where there's grub in residence.
Why not get going
Studiously sloeing?
Berries that bunch
Can be converted into lunch,
Stewed, chewed
And even brewed;
And every tart
Can only make a start
If some bush or tree
Gets unpicked by you or me.
So pluck the berry if you can
From the elder and the cran;
Bag it blithely if you will
From the wortle and the bil—
All are waiting to be picked,
All are ready to be pricked.
Even if you don't live very
Near your nearest public berry,
You should try to grab
Your slab
Of what Mother N. has fashioned
And is unravished and unrationed.

American Slang

A Glossary for Elder Readers

MUCH if not most of the good slang of any nation originates in its underworld. A majority of the better terms eventually work their way up into respectable usage, but for some reason a few never catch on. Therefore the only thing for us to do is go out and round them up. I had intended going to bed early, but

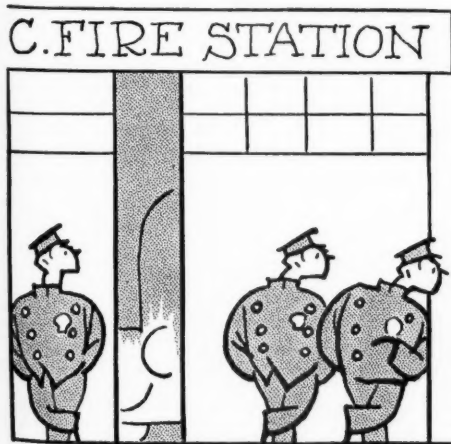
instead I'll just jump into my barrel (put on my clothes), slip on my new fawn-coloured thug's gloves (brass knucks) and we'll make a tour of places frequented by criminals, a tour not likely to include any

Taffy dumps. Sweets shops. Instead we shall find ourselves in low dives in which brawls frequently ensue. In fact more frequent ensuing is seldom attempted by brawls anywhere than in some of the places we will have to go. In any one of them, if we stay long enough, we may see a zither with a ziff give a uniperversity a Broadway hello. Of course that's quite a large order, but if the underworld can't put on such a scene I'm sure Hollywood can. In Hollywood you could find a thousand men ready at any instant's notice to portray a

Zither. An assassin who uses a knife. And the make-up department would find it an easy matter to supply the *Ziff.* Beard. This word almost makes it worth while for someone named Riffe to start manufacturing a shaving-cream named "Whiff" so as to use the slogan: "For Stiff Ziffs—Riffe's Whiff!" To continue, however, another thousand men in Hollywood, or perhaps even the same thousand, could give a good impersonation of a

Uniperversity. A University graduate who has become a narcotics user. All that would be left then would be the staging of the

Broadway hello. After the victim has received a friendly greeting from a zither and they have discussed the weather for a moment or so the zither suddenly changes the subject by stabbing the victim. Of course the entire outcome may be altered if the intended victim is on the alert,



Tony

anticipates the zither's moves, and hauls out his

Arrow. Pistol. *Syn.*: barking-iron, Betsy, bulldog, bung, business, convincer, grunt-iron, heater, persuader, positive, pump, rod, Roscoe, scent-sprinkler, smoke-iron, That Thing (a term of Mr. Damon Runyon's). "The difference" is yet another graphic term sometimes employed to designate a pistol. "Barking-iron" refers specifically to a pistol when carried by foot-pads or hold-up men. If the zither's intended victim does not wish to fog him with his Roscoe (shoot him) then he may merely let the zither have it with a bunch of fives twice and leave him wearing

Full mourning. A pair of black eyes. Full mourning is usually produced in this fashion by a hostile

Bunch of fives. A fist. Here is a beautifully descriptive term. One finds himself wondering if clasped hands would be then a bunch of tens. "Mountjoy shook an angry bunch of fives under Sneed's nose, while Hortense looked on excitedly with a bunch of tens." Hortense, being a mercenary young vixen fond of expensive things, would probably be willing to undergo being placed in full

mourning by a bunch of fives if she thought the blows would produce.

Real tears. Pearls. "A kind-hearted dowager just shed real tears for me," Hymie the hold-up man might remark cynically, and add, "I also made the old dame peel off her diamonds while she was at it!" A criminal sometimes provides his lady with real tears by dropping around to a jewellery shop after business hours. While making his selection he may likely be heard to murmur

"Tell me if the judge is coming." A safe-cracker's request to his look-out man to forward the news to him post-haste if a policeman looms large on the horizon. Should the look-out man be cleaning his spectacles or be bent over tying his shoe-lace when the long arm of the law elbows its way into the scene, then the safe-cracker soon finds himself in court and in all probability engages for his defence there some high-priced

Tongue. A criminal criminal lawyer, one who will defend a criminal accused of a bank robbery for a large fee, to be paid him in advance and in cash—the bank's cash. Among the rank and vile of tongues may be found many a

Crocodile. A lawyer who beats his

bosom, tears his hair, paints touching word-pictures of his client's unhappy childhood, and weeps for him before the jury. He is the master of every poignant, heart-rending, maudlin adjective in the

Dicky. Dictionary. What do you suppose the reaction of Dr. Johnson would have been could some present-day underworld cupboard-head (lame-brain, i.e., hollow wooden head) have accosted him and remarked: "Say, dat's one swell dicky youse scribbled, Doc!" Doubtless the good Doctor would have turned to his ubiquitous biographer and, summoning up all his massive dignity, would have suggested in stentorian tones, "Boswell, let us

Take it on the Arthur Duffy. Run away, escape. In fact were this to happen in the present day the eminent lexicographer would probably be so startled that he would immediately decide to

Spread-eagle. Depart hurriedly in an airplane. Should he take this course, or in any other way hasten to put distance between self and accoster, the latter would spread the word around that the Doc had

Turned on the fan. Escaped. In the underworld this refers specifically to



"What I 'ates about this evacuation is the country makes the kids' voices sound so 'ollow."



"Put me down at Edgware Road, please."

"Do me best, Mum—come out fighting at the next bell but one."

an escape from prison or from the police. An escaped convict "turned on the fan"—in other words, he gave his captors the air. Sometimes daring convicts in penitentiaries attempt to escape under the very eyes of the

Balcony owls. The guards in the guard-house on the walls. But to return to Dr. Johnson (after all, we can't leave a foremost figure of literature like the Doctor in the undignified act of taking it on the Arthur Duffy), the whole picture we have created here fails of course to make sense for the

simple reason that a cupboard-head wouldn't know anything about Doc Johnson's dicky and therefore couldn't compliment him on it. Had Boswell reported such an incident as we have described, we would all have been inclined to murmur,

"That's one for the end book."

"That is a highly improbable if not impossible story (or statement), and I for one don't intend for one minute to believe a single solitary word of it." Another slightly shorter translation of the phrase might be: "Hooey!" The

phrase given is the original one. At present it is usually shortened to "That's one for the book" and is showing signs of coming into general use.

But enough of underworld slang for the present. I've been talking out of the side of my mouth for so long here that I can't blow out a match without singeing my ear; so here's your chance to turn on the fan while I'm busy trying to get my kisser straightened out. But there'll be more of this to put up with later on: that I swear by the ziff of the Prophet!



"If you'd listened to the wireless, you'd have realised why the royalties are a bit down this month."

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

At School to a King

MR. HECTOR BOLITHO very reasonably quotes as an indication of the stern quality of Roumanian friendship for Great Britain that a Scottish boy was recently brought from Dundee by the Scouts of Bucharest to teach them to play the bagpipes. The author of *Roumania Under King Carol* (EYRE AND SPOTTISWOODE, 7/6) has studied the land and her people from the Danube delta, with its flights of flamingoes rising among vast spaces of sweet water and frail islands, to the snowy crests of the Carpathians, and with every incident of his journeyings has become more desirous to see that friendship between our loyal ally of the last Great War and this country strengthened. In the monarch the portrayer of the royal Victorians found another PRINCE ALBERT, schoolmaster of a nation just a little inclined to play truant from hard realities, a sovereign approachable, democratic and human, with a core of firmest resolution. His young son, MICHAEL, is being educated on even terms with eleven other boys of varied rank and nationality, selected as a cross-section of the country's population; and, characteristically, a general Youth Movement has been set on foot which combines disciplined training with spontaneous joyfulness for scores of thousands. Since these chapters were written Roumania's Prime Minister has been foully murdered and she faces days of stress. This slight but capable volume provides needed material for estimating her prospects in the present exigency.

Cottage Pie

In the present state of things one either wants to read about the war as directly as possible or else about things

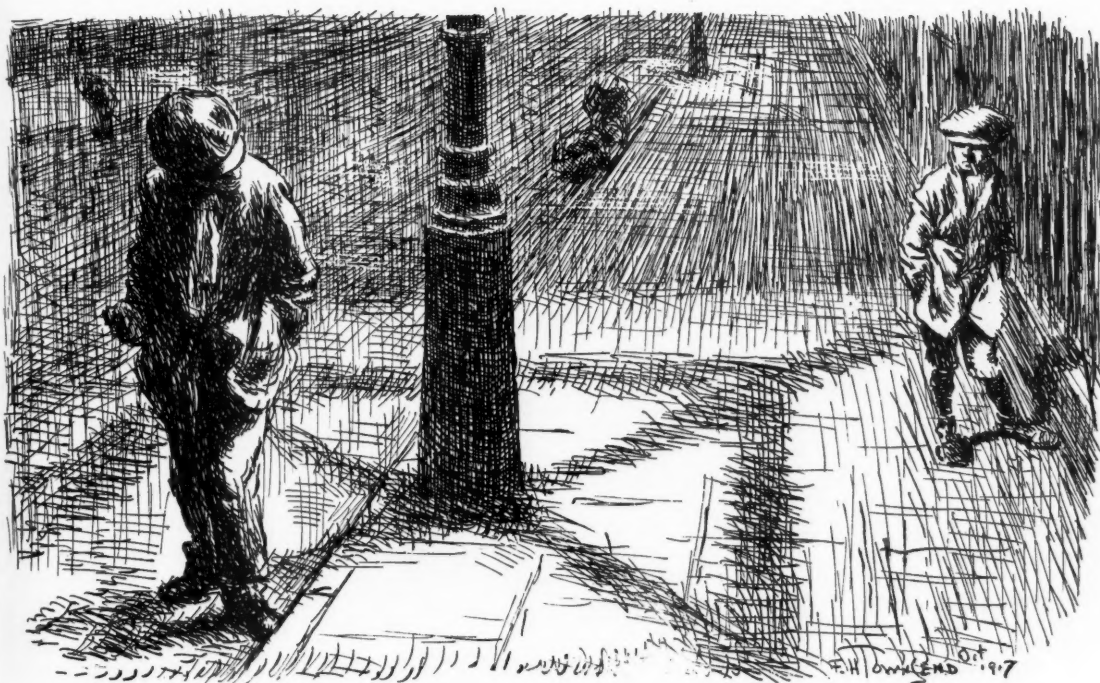
having absolutely no bearing on it at all. In the second category Mr. RICHARD CHURCH's *Calling for a Spade* (DENT, 7/6) is to be recommended if you are among the sensible people who find comfort in the thought that whatever war may do to our towns the pattern of English village life must remain largely unchanged. A collection of rural essays, the book covers the period of its author's ownership of a cottage in Essex; this only came to an end when the East Anglian sky grew so crammed with silly noise that to try to work under it was torture. (What a lot WILBUR WRIGHT has to answer for!) Mr. CHURCH has learned to understand that extraordinary piece of mechanism, the East Anglian mind, and is not taken in by its apparent simplicity. He writes very well of the country and of the slow enduring qualities which are its beauty; at times he is a little too sentimental, a little too whimsical, but in general he treats his subject with the sturdiness it needs. The best of the bunch is the title-essay, and an admirable disquisition on the intolerable nuisance of bird-noises gave this reviewer pleasure. Few but house-agents will disagree with the suggestion that since poets have provided most of the publicity for the home counties, the one trade should provide comfortable pensions for the other.

Island Gain

In recent years logs of small craft voyages to remote oceans have become almost as plentiful as blackberries, and, to be perfectly frank, the majority of them succeed in being completely boring. Mr. DENNIS PULESTON's account of his wanderings in three successive yachts, which he calls *Blue Water Vagabond* (PETER DAVIES, 12/6), is, however, a happy exception to the rule, and to those in search of what the jargon of the day calls "escape books" it may be warmly recommended. Travel in the flesh is one of the joys of life of which Mr. HITLER and his friends have for the time being deprived the greater part of humanity. But the pleasures of imaginary travel still remain, and Mr. PULESTON's sunlit pages at once summon before the mind's eye a hundred and one glimpses of coral reefs, strange land-falls, and—most alluring of all perhaps—lands "not on the chart," and suggest new objectives for the adventurous when happier conditions return. Among the many delightful ports of call on Mr. PULESTON's route, two perhaps stand out among the rest—the Dutch island of Saba in the Lesser Antilles and Ndeni in the Santa Cruz group, where there are "no traders, no missionaries, no planters." Fishing for



"You're Dummy, Mr. Bindlebine—see if that was a small incendiary bomb."



ECHOES OF THE AIR-RAIDS

First Souvenir-hunter. "FOUND ANYFINK, 'ERB?"

Second ditto. "No; BUT THAT 'LL BE ALL RIGHT. THEY'RE SURE TO COME AGAIN TERMORRER NIGHT."

F. H. Townsend, October 17th, 1917

authentic treasure and equally authentic but less elusive pearls, and an experiment in the cultivation of coconuts, provide variety from the ordinary business of sailing.

Entente in Brittany

The personal quality that makes old water-colours so much more satisfactory than the most competent and discerning photographs is what makes *The Red Centaur* (FABER AND FABER, 7/6) such a charming record of vanished times and departing manners. Miss MARJORIE MACK, whose first novel exhibits such a promising choice of theme and method, has described two households, French and English, facing each other across a little inlet of the Breton Rance, not far from St. Malo. A child can paddle across this inlet, and the child who does so, *Laurel*, is the link which binds the *Des Ebihans* of the château to the *Maudes* of Le Grand Chalet. It is mainly through her eyes that the feats of those leisurely pre-the-last-war days romantically disclose

themselves. Not all are happy, for there is a *mariage de convenance* to go (rather untypically) astray, and the Breton coast has a ruthlessness of its own that brings horror and death into the little heroine's orbit. Even here, however, beauty prevails; and a creative talent that can remain so faithful to its chosen key—and that no common one—is well worth watching.

A Good Deed Prevented

MESSRS. CHATTO AND WINDUS claim that Mr. GEOFFREY HOUSEHOLD'S *Rogue Male*, which they publish at 7/6, is one of the finest narratives of pure adventure that have appeared since *The Thirty-Nine Steps*; and at any rate the comparison with Mr. BUCHAN is a fair one. For Mr. HOUSEHOLD has a similar ability to grip his reader at the outset and swing him along in a whirl of excitement. It is difficult to tell exactly how he does it, his style being calm and to the point, but parallel with the efficient

unrolling of a good story go frequent glimpses of a totally different world of the imagination. If ever a book was topical, this is. It is about an Englishman, well-known for his wealth and his brilliance as a big-game shot, who, tiring of a shoot in Poland, crosses the border and, trekking the last hundred miles, stalks the biggest game in the world—a dictator. At the moment of consummation a sudden change of wind robs him of his chance, and he himself becomes the quarry to a corps of secret police so deadly that he is tracked even to an underground lair in the West-country. How he nearly falls to his pursuers and what the future can hold for so marked a man Mr. HOUSEHOLD must tell for himself. He does it extremely well. The only quarrel this reviewer has with him is with his suggestion that his hero would not have been conscious all the time of his special reason for wanting to shoot the dictator.

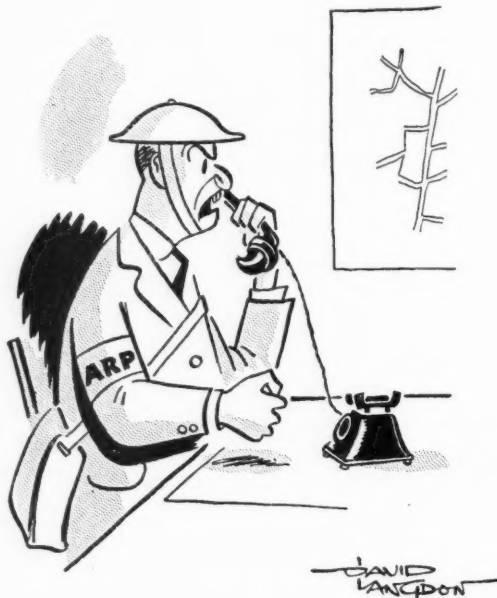
Cotswold Chronicle

It is the strength of the countryside that its greatest pleasures are common property. Work is in itself dignified (and largely enjoyable) and the round of the seasons is a continual raree-show. With the luck to live in the Gloucestershire Cotswolds, somewhere between Stow-on-the-Wold and Winchcombe, Mrs. MARGARET WESTERLING has entered into a great rural inheritance. She writes of water-mills that still grind corn, cider-presses that still ooze cider, of ploughing (with oxen as well as horses), of quarrying that goes to repairing dry stone walls and magnificent barns, and, above all, of the flocks that still people—though more sparsely than of old—what was once the great sheep-walk of England. But *Country Contentments* (CONSTABLE, 8/6), though rightly giving pride of place to country work, has more leisurely interests—from rare flowers, grown rarer for lack of sheltering timber, and hitherto unexplored barrows with alluring caches of pottery and coins. Her text is as discerning as her photographs; and she is so seldom historically at fault that it is with trepidation one suggests that the patron saint of the custom of “going a-thomasing” is BECKET and not the doubting apostle.

Leading Lady

Your enjoyment of *The Dark Star* (COLLINS, 8/6) will probably depend on whether you prefer a typical MARCH COST novel or a departure from it; for here you have both, though the typical chapters are long and many and the unexpected are precisely two. They are the last of the book,

and depict with appropriate humour, malice and dexterity a charming actress, who is being unduly detained in a nursing-home, compassing her escape to meet her actor lover. Unluckily it cannot be pretended that it is worth while traversing such long stretches of the careers of *Fanny Wreath* and *Eden Loring* to arrive at this delectable finale; because no subject for a novel could possibly be more unremunerative—witness the trail of attempts and failures that lie behind—than the imaginary life of any great genius whatsoever. One has only to recall the vitality of the genuine Lives say of DUSE—most of them shockingly ill-written—and compare them with *Fanny's* cleverly sustained progress from the old clothes' shop to stardom to realise that creative difficulties have proved too great and that it takes extraordinary powers to give substance to an extraordinary personality.



“In Winklebury there’s bags of sand but no bags, while in Little Chipley there’s bags of bags but no sand.”

Blackmail and Other Crimes

As several murders and a couple of suicides take place in *The Merryloes Mystery* (STANLEY PAUL, 7/6), Mr. RICHARD GOYNE cannot be accused of pampering the guests at Sir Andrew Dunsany’s “fine old country seat.” However fine this house may have been, the pleasure of visiting it must at least have been qualified by the alarming fact that, during these days, “death was a matter of almost hourly occurrence.” In this tale of carnage Mr. GOYNE is completely successful in creating an atmosphere of doom and impending calamity, but disasters of various kinds occur so frequently that they lose some of their power to horrify or thrill.

The Kind Inspector

Admirers of Mr. E. C. R. LORAC’s stories need no introduction to *Chief Inspector Macdonald*, and the only complaint they can conceivably make against him in *Black Beadle* (COLLINS, 7/6) is that at times his behaviour is almost incredibly kind. Here the hunt after law-breakers places *Macdonald* in positions where a slip might land him in serious trouble; for the longer he investigates this mysterious case the more convinced he becomes that influential people will be relieved if a scapegoat is found—and a wretched little man is ready at hand to fill that rôle. Mr. LORAC’s attention to characterisation and attractive style combine to make him one of the most reliable and readable of our sensational novelists.

“GIRL GUIDE STAMPS”

Heading in “The Times.”

Tut, tut.

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